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DeBary Couple's Fisherman Son Tells Of 67 Days In Cuban Prison

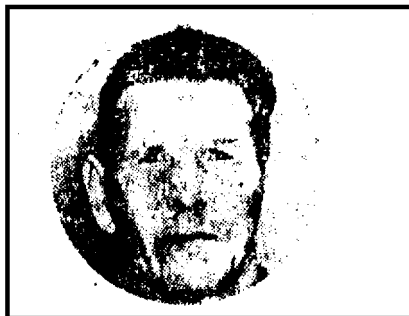
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DEBARY — Clifford Burnes, son of a DeBary couple, was one of the men released from Castro's prison this month after a boating accident and confinement in a Havana G-2 security headquarters jail accused of being a CIA agent for the U.S.

Some 35 pounds lighter and wan from the incarceration, Clifford, of New Hampshire, was greeted by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. James J. Burnes, who are seeing to it that he gets nourishing food and affection, both lacking during his 67 days as a prisoner — 43 in solitary confinement. His sturdy New England physique and stoic acceptance of fate stood him in good stead during this ordeal.

IN A PRESS' interview, Clifford said that nine Americans had started out on the 18-ft. motor vessel Shrub to do some fishing and possibly look for treasure. But on their route toward the Dominican Republic their rudder came loose and they drifted for four days and nights without food or water.



CLIFFORD BURNES
... 43 days in solitary

"We tried to bail out the boat, but in short order the sea came in waist high. We threw away our motor to lighten the load and then tried leaping over the side and clinging to the boat which would also have lessened our load. But sharks drove us back. We even formed a makeshift sail and that helped for a time. Two of the men dived out when we saw land and tried to beach our boat but the tide was too strong. So they went inland for help and didn't return! We learned later that they found themselves targets for

some 40 guns with unfriendly Cubans glaring at them.

"Immediately afterward, four Cubans armed with guns came out to our boat and took us prisoners to Havana. We were issued prisoners' identifying yellow shirts and old second-hand pants, some of which were held up with improvised safety pins. We were fed frugal meals of beans and spaghetti and our cells were 9 by-12 feet. We slept on racks with mattresses but no blankets. After a time there were a few pillows brought in from other cells.

ATTORNEY James Donovan told our skipper, Capt. Jack W. Brown of Miami, that although the Castro officials tried to bring out that we were CIA informers, they were finally persuaded that this was no spy or sabotage trip but a regulation fishing crew and so Donovan arranged for our return."

Clifford is leaving today for Miami where the nine American fishermen will again take to the sea. "But we'll steer clear of any routing that might even veer toward Havana," he promised. "We want no more Cuban welcomes."

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